

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 150479

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 150479

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652:GDS

TAGS:EWWT, AS, US

SUBJECT: SHIPPING: TRADE PRACTICES ACT DISCRIMINATION
AGAINST INBOUND CONFERENCES

REF: CANBERRA 4161

1. DEPARTMENT SHARES EMBASSY'S CONCERN OVER SLOW GOA PACE
IN RECTIFYING DRAFTING ERROR IN TRADE PRACTICES ACT.
HOWEVER, GIVEN PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES WE DO NOT FEEL HIGH
LEVEL OFFICIAL REPRESENTATIONS WITH OR WITHOUT AIDE
MEMOIRE SHOULD BE MADE AT THIS TIME. GOA IS ALREADY
ON RECORD, ALBEIT INFORMALLY, RE ITS INTENT TO AMEND ACT
AND IS FULLY COGNIZANT OF USG CONCERN. MOREOVER, DELAY
IN ACTION ON REVISIONS APPEARS TO BE DIRECTLY RELATED TO
TIE-IN WITH UNRELATED GOA TANKER POLICY PROBLEM AND
UNRESOLVED DIFFERENCES THEREON. WHILE CONNECTION IS
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PAGE 02 STATE 150479

UNFORTUNATE FROM OUR STANDPOINT, WE BELIEVE IT IS PREF-
ERABLE TO AVOID ANY ACTION WHICH-MIGHT UNNECESSARILY

EXACERBATE AN ALREADY SOMEWHAT SENSITIVE SITUATION AND TO CONTINUE PRESENT LOW KEY APPROACH FOR TIME BEING. MORE-OVER, WE ALSO WISH TO REFRAIN FROM ESCALATING OUR APPROACH AT THIS TIME BECAUSE DOING SO MIGHT PRECIPITATE IRRITABLE ATMOSPHERE WHICH COULD HAVE ADVERSE IMPLICATIONS FOR FMC-DOT EFFORTS CURRENTLY UNDERWAY TO RESOLVE US/GOA

POLICY DIFFERENCES ON ACME/BULKFRIDGE APPLICATION TO JOIN AUSTRALIAN/EASTERN USA SHIPPING CONFERENCE. THIS LATTER PROBLEM IS OF GREATER CONCERN AT THE MOMENT THAN IS THE TP ACT AMENDMENT WHICH GOA IS SEEKING TO REMEDY BECAUSE OF ITS IMMEDIATE LEGAL CONFLICT POTENTIAL.

2. EMBASSY MAY ASSURE ROWLAND AND GRIGOR THAT DEPARTMENT HAS NOT ATTRIBUTED INFORMATION PROVIDED THE EMBASSY TO THEM AND WILL CONTINUE TO RESPECT THEIR CONFIDENCES. INFORMATION THAT HAS BEEN PASSED ON TO INTERESTED PARTIES HAS BEEN UNATTRIBUTED AND GENERAL IN NATURE. WE WOULD BE REMISS, HOWEVER, NOT TO POINT OUT THAT CONFERENCE AND ITS LEGAL COUNSEL, BOTH IN WASHINGTON AND AUSTRALIA, ARE FAMILIAR WITH RESPECTIVE GOA MINISTRIES AND OFFICIALS ADDRESSING PROBLEM AND ARE THEREFORE ABLE TO MAKE OWN DEDUCTIONS BASED ON INFORMATION FROM A VARIETY OF SOURCES, INCLUDING DEPARTMENT. FURTHERMORE, WE ARE NOT AWARE OF THE LATTER HAVING ACTED IN A FASHION TO CAUSE REPORTED JITTERS. KISSINGER

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